

What's Happening from **Environmental Building News**
July 1, 2010

AIA Releases 2030 Energy Performance Reporting Tool

At its annual convention in June 2010, The American Institute of Architects (AIA) released a reporting tool for firms participating in its "2030 Commitment." Over 100 firms have now signed on to the commitment, which is a more pragmatic, step-by-step move toward the goals of Architecture 2030's "2030 Challenge" to eliminate fossil-fuel use in all new buildings by 2030.

Firms that participate in the 2030 Commitment are supposed to have energy models for all projects they are designing, and to report on how that predicted performance compares to the 2030 Challenge goals. The newly released reporting tool supports that process. It consists of an Excel workbook in which firms list all the projects they're working on. They also provide the square footage and predicted energy use intensity for those projects. The Excel file looks up the corresponding 2030 Challenge target and shows how the project's energy compares to this target. It also includes features that make it usable even for tenant fit-outs and other projects where predicted energy use numbers are not available.

Rand Ekman, AIA of Cannon Design helped develop the tool, with the goal of standardizing similar efforts that were emerging within many different firms. "We found that firms that track the projects do it in Excel. We're making it easier for them," said Ekman.

Many firms are concerned about revealing the energy profile of their designs, afraid that they will be used inappropriately to rank or criticize their work. Those concerns drove AIA to curtail public data. Participating firms will report to AIA only their aggregated results, not project-by-project specifics. "We originally thought that the firm's overall performance might be available as an attachment in each firm's online profile," said Kelly Pickard, program director at AIA. But after hearing concerns, AIA will publicize only the combined results of all the firms.

The reporting tool itself represents a victory of simplicity and usability over sophistication. It doesn't try to accommodate the nuances of mixed-use projects. It ignores unconditioned spaces that are part of the gross square footage. Nor does it adjust lighting power density for the effect of lighting controls. There is plenty of room for adding complexity in the future, or for a particular firm to use the tool to suit its needs, but for now it is designed to minimize the barriers to participation in the 2030 Commitment.

Anyone can download and use the tool to compile information, but only firms that have signed onto the 2030 Commitment can report their results to AIA and participate in the collective analysis of those results. More details about the 2030 Commitment, including a list of participating firms and the reporting tool, can be found on the AIA website.

– Nadav Malin

For more information:

AIA 2030 Commitment
www.aia.org/about/initiatives/AIAB079458
